

Message Text

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21

ACTION H-03

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AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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TAGS: OREP (DIGGS, CHARLES C)

SUBJ: CODEL DIGGS

REF: A) 75 STATE 303495, B) COLOMBO 239 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: JAN 20-21 VISIT TO COLOMBO BY CONGRESSMAN DIGGS AND STAFF ADVISOR DR CHALLONER WAS BRIEF BUT SUCCESSFUL AND SUEFUL CONTACT BETWEEN SENIOR MEMBER US LEGISLATURE AND SIGNIFICANT GSL OFFICIALS. EXCHANGES OF VIEWS WERE SUBSTANTIVE AND POSITIVE. PRESS AND RADIO COVERAGE WAS PROMINENT AND HELPFUL IN EXPLAINING VARIOUS AMERICAN VIEWPOINTS. WE APPRECIATE VISIT AND ENCOURAGE FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL CALLS IN SRI LANKA. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING ARRIVAL ON SCHEDULE, GREETING BY GSL PROTOCOL OFFICIALS, AND INFORMAL LUNCHEON WITH EMBASSY STAFF MEMBERS, CONGRESSMAN DIGGS AND DR CHALLONER MET WITH FINANCE MINISTRY SECRETARY DR LAL JAYAWARDENA. FORTY-FIVE MINUTE DISCUSSION CENTERED ON GSL ECONOMIC SITUATION, PROSPECTS, POLICY AND PLANS. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF AMERICAN FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S SEVEN UNGA INITIATIVES. CONGRESSMAN THEN CALLED ON DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS LAKSHMAN JAYAKODY (SEE REF B).

3. CONGRESSMAN AND DR CHALLONER THEN MET INFORMALLY WITH REPS OF PRESS AND RADIO. PRESS

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COVERAGE DURING AND AFTER VISIT WAS LOW KEY BUT PRO-

MINENT AND FACTUAL. SEVEN DAILIES REPORTED VISIT WHILE
USIS-ARRANGED PRESS MEETING GENERATED FOUR PRESS
ARTICLES AND INTERVIEW CARRIED BY SRI LANKA BROAD-
CASTING CORP, JAN 21. IN RESPONSE TO
QUESTION ON INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE CONCEPT, CONGRESS-
MAN DIGGS WAS REPORTED IN PRESS TO HAVE SAID THAT AL-
THOUGH UNITED STATES WAS INTERESTED, PRESENT USG
PLANS FOR DIEGO GARCIA WILL GO AHEAD. HE STRONGLY COM-
PLIMENTED QUALITY OF SRI LANKA LEADERSHIP. ASKED ABOUT
FOREIGN INVESTMENT, (CURRENTLY LEADING ISSUE HERE) HE
SAID HE DID NOT FORESEE MAJOR AMERICAN INVESTOR INTEREST
IN SRI LANKA BECAUSE OF DISTANCE AND SMALL SIZE OF AVAIL-
ABLE MARKETS. ON ANGOLA, GIST OF STATEMENT WAS SIMILAR TO
THOSE PUBLICIZED FROM PREVIOUS STOPS.

4. CEYLONENSE GUESTS AT CHARGE'S DINNER IN HONOR OF
CONGRESSMAN DIGGS INCLUDED REPS OF SRI
LANKA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CENTRAL BANK, AND MINISTRIES
OF DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND OF PLANNING AND
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS.

5. WE MUCH APPRECIATE VISIT BY CONGRESSMAN DIGGS AND
DR CHALLONER. IN THIS YEAR OF SRI LANKA'S
HEIGHTENED ROLE AMONG DEVELOPING WZD NON-ALIGNED NATIONS,
FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL VISITS WOULD BE MOST USEFUL.
PERKINS

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